



Department of Justice

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Southern District of Indiana**

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HOGSETT ANNOUNCES FEDERAL FIREARM, COUNTERFEIT CHARGES AGAINST INDIANAPOLIS MAN

U.S. Attorney's Violent Crime Initiative produces another Marion County prosecution

PRESS RELEASE

INDIANAPOLIS – Joseph H. Hogsett, the United States Attorney, announced today that William “Ricky” Harris, age 34, of Indianapolis, has been charged with illegally possessing a dozen firearms as a convicted felon, as well as with illegally possessing counterfeit materials. Harris filed a petition with the court today asking to enter a plea of guilty to these charges.

“This office continues to focus on reducing violent crime in this city by taking the ‘worst of the worst’ off the streets,” Hogsett said. “As the record shows, our Violent Crime Initiative prosecution team has zero tolerance for habitual offenders who choose to arm themselves in violation of the law.”

On December 13, 2011, Marion County law enforcement searched Harris and his home, and allegedly found him to be in possession of a dozen firearms, including pistols, rifles, and shotguns. These included the following:

- Beretta, .32 caliber pistol
- Marlin, .22 caliber rifle
- Winchester, 12 gauge shotgun
- High Standard, 12 gauge shotgun
- Winchester, 16 gauge shotgun
- Henry Repeating Rifle Company, .22 caliber rifle
- Harrington & Richardson, .410 gauge shotgun
- Smith & Wesson, 9mm pistol
- Browning, 12 gauge shotgun
- Ruger, .357 caliber revolver
- Kel-Tec, .223 caliber pistol
- Davis Industries, .32 caliber derringer

Harris was previously convicted of maintaining a common nuisance in Marion Superior Court in March 2003, and therefore is not legally permitted to possess any firearm.

In addition, an information filed by the government today alleges that Harris was found to be in possession of fifteen or more counterfeit gift cards that had been re-encoded with account access information different than that which was printed on the card. The information further alleges that investigators seized the gift cards, hundreds of dollars in cash, and two credit card re-encoders that can be used to make alterations to access devices such as gift cards.

This prosecution is the result of a collaborative investigation as part of the U.S. Attorney's Violent Crime Initiative, and included the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, as well as the United States Secret Service.

Announced in March of 2011, the Violent Crime Initiative (VCI) represents a district-wide strategy to work with local law enforcement and county prosecutors to combat drug traffickers and criminals that use and carry firearms in their illegal activities. In the first nine months of the initiative, the VCI produced a dramatic increase in the number of gun-related charges brought federally – from just 14 felony possession charges in 2010 to 103 last year.

According to Assistant U.S. Attorney Zachary A. Myers, who is prosecuting the case for the government, Harris faces up to 10 years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine if he is convicted of being a felon in possession of a firearm. The counterfeit charges similarly carry a possible penalty of up to 10 years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine. An initial hearing will be scheduled before a judge in Indianapolis.

An information is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. A defendant is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial at which the government must prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

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